



## Counting Your Blessings Can Bring Improved Health

Employee Assistance Program

November, 2014



### ***Gratitude: the quality of being thankful***

This November 27<sup>th</sup> will be a day that many of us celebrate with our community and families to recognize and give thanks for God's blessings. What would happen if we extended these feelings of gratitude throughout the year? New research concludes that it produces improved health!

Here are just a few examples of what researchers have discovered:

- Researchers at the University of Connecticut studied people who had experienced one heart attack. Those patients who saw benefits from their heart attack, such as becoming more appreciative of life, experienced a lower risk of having another heart attack.
- Studies at the University of California at Davis found that grateful people take better care of themselves by engaging in more exercise, eating a healthier diet and having regular physical examinations with their medical providers.
- Researchers at this same University found that people who keep gratitude journals (daily writing of three to five things they are grateful for) spend less time awake before falling asleep, have better quality of sleep and feel more refreshed in the morning.
- The National Institute of Health researchers found that grateful people experience less depression, along with fewer aches and pains.

### **Keeping a Gratitude Journal**

- Journaling is more effective if you first make the conscious decision to become happier and more grateful. Don't just go through the motions. What are you genuinely grateful for?
- Some research indicates that writing once or twice a week is more beneficial than keeping a daily journal. Other research concludes that daily entries are more beneficial. Decide which works better for you.
- Keep it simple. Don't worry about grammar or spelling. Write, blog or use one of the gratitude journal apps that are available.

Counting the blessings in your life is a choice you can make starting today. If you would like to meet with an EAP counselor to discuss this further, please call 1-888-847-4975 or 402-398-5566.

*CHI Health Employee Assistance Program wishes you a very Happy Thanksgiving!*